

The Albany HERALD

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The Congressional Art Competition allows high school students throughout the country to demonstrate their artistic abilities. - Jennifer Maddox Parks, staff writer

ALBANY, GA — Since 1982, the Congressional Art Competition has allowed American high school students to showcase their artistic skills.

On Tuesday, the talent from Southwest Georgia had their chance to shine.

Rep. Sanford Bishop, D-Albany, recognized the honorees from this year's competition within the

2nd Congressional District during an awards presentation at his office in downtown Albany.

“Our goal is to encourage young artists, promote art education and give recognition to the outstanding work that our schools are doing to enable young people to realize their potential,” Bishop said.

The works of four students were acknowledged, none of whom were present to accept their awards. In place of the students was Deerfield-Windsor School art teacher Donna Rouse, there to represent two students — Anna Germany, a junior, and Anna Barge, a senior.

Rebecca Cannady was there to represent her daughter, Kelly Cannady, a senior at Thomas County Central High School in Thomasville.

Cannady’s daughter was third runner-up for her work “Girl” in marker, watercolor pencil and magazine collage. This is her second year being recognized in the competition.

“We love this,” the student’s mother said. “We appreciate Congressman Bishop and his office for doing this. We are just thrilled to be a part of it.”

Germany and Barge received honorable mention and first place respectively.

“I feel very excited Sara won,” Rouse said. “She worked long hours and she takes time to get things perfect. She does several mediums and does well with each.”

Germany entered an untitled work in colored pencil as did Barge.

Elizabeth Pollack of Peach County High School in Fort Valley received second runner-up for her pencil drawing entitled “Faerie.”

The judges for the district competition were Al Smith of A.K. Smith & Associates, Vicky Stephens of Westmoreland & Patterson and Chauncey Grant of Peragon Inc. — all of Albany.

The nationwide contest is open to high schoolers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories. The winning piece from each district is displayed in an 11-month exhibit at the tunnel that leads to the U.S. Capitol building.

“I wish that everyone who lives in our area of the state would have an opportunity to visit the Capitol during the coming year and view our winning artwork on display,” Bishop said. “I might be biased, but I always think that our district’s artwork is the best.”

The competition is sponsored by members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

“It’s a voluntary activity on the part of each member, no public funds are used,” Bishop said. “This is something we underwrite ourselves because we think it’s important to augment what our schools and community arts organizations are already doing to help young people develop and showcase their extraordinary talent.”

Since its inception, more than 650,000 high school students in the nation have participated.

The entries from the 2nd Congressional District will remain at the Albany office on West Roosevelt Avenue throughout the upcoming week. Barge's entry will be sent to Washington, D.C., as soon as the Albany exhibit is over to later be placed in the national exhibit, set to open in June.